

Student-Led Conferences at Merriam Elementary School



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The purpose of student-led conferences

The purpose of the student-led conference is to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on and demonstrate their learning.

Student-led conferences allow students to:

- Reflect on learning
- Extend learning
- Deepen understanding of self as a learner
- Demonstrate independence in learning
- Be empowered
- Foster pride and develop ownership of personal goals and achievements.

How they are organized and setup

- Teacher does not participate during the student-led conference.
- Three or four student-led conferences will run at the same time in the classroom.
- Conferences will take place before or after school.
- Time slots will be scheduled for each student.

The day of the conference

- Students will invite their parents to their conference spot in the classroom.
- Students will lead the conferences using a prepared agenda.
- Students will write a reflection of their experiences later that day.
- Parents will write a note to their children before leaving.
- The conference folders, including the notes, will remain at school.

Suggested questions/comments

Here are some suggested questions and comments appropriate for a conference.

Please note that these are only suggestions.

- What is first on your agenda?
- Can you tell me more about...?
- How did you learn that?
- Can you show me an example?
- I've noticed that you've learned...
- What are you most proud of?
- It makes me proud to see that you...
- How do you feel about...?
- What was the most important thing you learned during this project?
- What did you find challenging about....?
- I can see improvement in...
- What do you think you have improved on in math?
- What are you working on now?
- What would you like to learn more about?

“You can do great work throughout the year, and the conference lets you show your parents what you've learned and how you have improved.”

A student

“Having my child lead the conference has shown me how my child views her learning. It was powerful!”

A parent

“Teaching students to be reflective about their learning provides them with life skills.”

A teacher

Frequently Asked Questions

Will the teacher be part of the conference?

No, the teacher will have helped the students prepare for the conferences but will not be present at the conference.

How will I know what to do during the conference?

Follow the student's lead.

What is my role during the conference?

- Be an active listener.
- Provide positive feedback.
- Encourage explanation.
- Ask guiding questions (see suggestions in brochure).
- Write a positive note to your child.

Will I have another conference this year?

Merriam School provides three conferences each year:

- Fall parent-teacher conference
- Midyear student-led conference
- Spring parent-teacher conference

How does the conference end?

Your child will end the conference when she is finished showing her work.

What do I do if I have a pressing question for the classroom teacher?

You should contact the teacher to set an appointment up for another time.